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ABSTRACT

This project designed and implemented an instructional unit in the production of television commercials in a distributive education program. In addition to providing students with a more comprehensive unit on advertising, the producing of commercials for products sold in the school gave them an opportunity to incorporate classroom theory into practical sales. Instructional materials and samples developed during 1979 summer months included a vidiotape on designing and taping a television commercial, demonstration set of television commercials, sound slide show explaining necessary pieces of equipment used in producing a commercial, and overhead transparencies illustrating effective graphical techniques. Actual in-class instructional activities and production during the 1979-80 school year included students' (1) identification of advertising appeals and incorporation of them into a commercial, (2) development of technical television production skills (camera, lighting, set design, video deck, sound, special effects generator), (3) production of appropriate graphics, and (4) writing of a script and story board for a commercial. (YLB)

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FINAL REPORT

OF

ELECTRONIC MEDIA MERCHANDISING IN DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION

RED BANK REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
101 RIDGE ROAD
LITTLE SILVER, N. J. 07739

CE026145

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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This project reported herein was conducted pursuant to a contract from the New Jersey Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education and Career Preparation. It was funded under Section 132 of Public Law 94-482.

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Beginning Date

June 30, 1980
Ending Date

The Contractors undertaking this project were encouraged to express fully their judgments in professional and technical matters. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official funding agency positions or policies.

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PROJECT TITLE: Electronic Media Merchandising in Distributive Education

LEGAL NAME OF APPLICANT DISTRICT, INSTITUTION OR AGENCY: Red Bank Regional High School District

ADDRESS: 101 Ridge Road

Little Silver, New Jersey 07739

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ABSTRACT

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

(Use this sheet and no more than one other to type in single-spaced form a statement of project objectives, procedures that were followed, state and local priorities emphasized and the expected contribution of the project to vocational education.)

The objective of this project is to design and implement an instructional unit in the production of television commercials in a Distributive Education program. The procedures include the development of instructional materials and samples during the 1979 summer months and actual in-class instructional activities and production during the 1979-1980 school year.

Television commercials are now being produced in many local cable television studios, It is no longer an activitiy limited to major networks in New York City. This area of production is one that is of central interest to the curriculum area of Distributive Education. In some respects, it is a new and changing occupational field for local D. E. programs.

This project is consistent with our local district goals:

#1. Develop skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
#3. Learn how to examine and use information.
#6. Develop skills to enter a specific field of work.

It is also in line with the N. J. State Board priority #3. Encourage curricular and institutional planning necessary to prepare students for life in the future.

The expected contributionsof this project to vocational education include expanding options for vocational students, enriching the local D.E. curriculum and demonstrating inter-disciplinary cooperation in the comprehensive high school.

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II. TEXT

A. Introduction

This project is concerned with the development and application of vocational education curriculum materials and techniques in the area of Distributive Education. It will involve D. E. students in the design, production and analysis of television (video taped) commercials. The activities will be competency based and the completed materials will be available for reproduction and dissemination to other interested vocational educators and to the community cable television network.

1. Problem

The district presently has a Distributive Education Program which includes a "school store" operation/activitity as part of the regular program. The advertising units in the existing program include activities with print media but not with electronic media.

The contemporary acceptance of commercial and local cable television appears to suggest a need for student exposure and student competencies in the areas of advertising and the production of television commercials. The local municipality is part of the Futurevision cable television network. In addition the high school building has an internal closed-circuit system in place and in operation.

The need for instructional units in this area coupled with the availability of a cable system in the community and a closed-circuit system within the building appear to provide the major resources for an exceptional curriculum development project.

2. Objectives

To produce an instructional video tape on how to design and tape a television commercial.

To produce a set of television commercials for demonstration to students.

To produce a sound/slide show which explains the necessary pieces of equipment used in producing a television commercial.

To prepare overhead transparencies to illustrate effective graphic techniques.

To identify advertising appeals and incorporate them into a television commercial.

To develop technical television production skills: camera, lighting, set design, video deck, sound, special effects generator.

To produce appropriate graphics.

To write a script and story board for a commercial.

3. Related Literature

A national project sponsored by the U. S. Department of H.E.W. titled "Critical Television Viewing Skills" has as its aim to enable students to use television instead of being used by it. This concept is central to this project. Since the D. E. students will have the technology of video recording as an advertising tool to deal with in their occupational role, it is essential that they become informed users of the medium. This implies inclusion of user-skills in the D. E. curriculum.

The recent Carnegie Commission report entitled "A Public Trust: The Report of the Carnegie Commission on the Future of Public Broadcasting" cites that the average American household watches television for 6½ hours a day and that in many households more time is spent with the electronic media than with other human beings. This fact in itself places an importance on the understanding of the medium by D. E. students.

Learning how to organize and produce commercials will enable students to become more informed "consumers" of commercials. Concern is typically expressed by educators that television is inherently passive. Experience and exposure to production will help in making students active and critical users of other people's commercials.

Television is made of two parts - production and distribution.

David Grieve ("Our Newer Electronic Technology," Lifelong Learning, Vol. 17, No. 19, September, 1975) sees the development of programs by "nonprofessionals" as a significant step in the development of the medium. Enabling students and teachers to produce materials for the community cable system will enrich the school program and the community. It will contribute to the development of the medium in the community and involve students in both the production and distribution aspects of the media.

The project's involvement with the local cable television network is a significant part of its value. Students will have an opportunity to see their work out there in the real world and not just on a monitor in a school setting.

Since both merchandising and advertising are parts of the existing D.E. program, a curriculum change will not be necessary. This project will be expanding existing activities in the district's D. E. program.

B. Body of Report

1. Procedures Used

General Design:

The overall concept of the proposal was for trained staff members to produce various media presentations which presented to students the necessary information for producing a television commercial. Once these media presentations were created, a group of students were hired to work with the staff members to produce a set of demonstration commercials. Both phases, the staff media presentations and student produced demonstration commercials, were incorporated into the Distributive Education curriculum and were made available to other vocational instructors and programs.

Commercials produced by the Distributive Education students were shown on the school's closed-circuit system, at the "Back To School Night" for parents and at a conference for Monmouth County reading teachers, "Media Utilization in Reading;" I was the guest speaker at this meeting.

2. Findings

It is obvious from the observations stated by Mr. Joseph Farrell, Distributive Education Coordinator, that this program had an impact on many phases of the Distributive Education program.

The following is a report on the program as observed from Mr. Farrell's point of view:

> "The cooperative program between the English Department and the Business Education Department relating to the teaching of Television Advertising was definitely a success. The following specific results can be noted:
>
> 1. Greater interest on the part of Distributive Education students not only in just T. V. Advertising, but in all phases of advertising.
>
> 2. Greater use of the Line-O-Scribe machine in the printing of graphics for the T. V. Advertising resulted in the more rapid acquisition of skills in printing, layout, and clip art visuals. It also resulted in greater use and a greater variety of uses of the Metro clip art.
>
> 3. There was a transfer of skills relating to the writing of T. V. Scripts to the writing of advertising copy and headlines for the newspaper advertising phase of the Distributive Education course. This resulted in a better

variety of newspaper ads published in the school newspaper. A competitive spirit was built up between the students responsible for the T. V. ads and those responsible for the newspaper advertising.

4. There was greater participation in the Television Advertising competition at DECA State Leadership Conference. As you know, two students scored well in the competition, with one student (Victoria Maxwell) receiving an honorable mention. This is a first for Red Bank Regional students.

5. Showing the Advertising in the student commons area during student's free periods produced an instant increase in sales. A tally was kept on the warm-up suit ad, and six sales resulted directly from the student's viewing the Television Commercial prepared by Barbara Miller.

6. The student body in general has a more positive attitude toward Distributive Education.

7. There has been an increase in enrollment in D. E. I for next year. I cannot say for sure that this is a direct result of the T. V. Advertising in the commons area, but it cannot help but have a positive effect.

8. Several D. E. I students have expressed an interest in entering the T. V. Commercial competition in next year's DECA competition as a result of viewing the Advertising and talking to this year's entrants.

This cooperative effort will, it is hoped, be a continuing venture."

3. Interpretation of Findings

The findings in this project clearly indicate that the total process involved in producing a television commercial had a great deal of impact on the Distributive Education curriculum and program as well as the people (students and parents) who viewed the commercials.

On the cognitive level students were required to utilize basic skills in reading, writing and organizing to present a creative concept in commercial format. Inherent in this process was the students' need to communicate effectively with their peers and through their commercial. Speaking and writing were focused on in the Distributive Education class and the television studio.

Students were also required to have an understanding of television production equipment, terms and graphic design. This information was attained through materials prepared by the project director and the Distributive Education teacher. Of critical importance was the students' ability to recall this information in practical settings: the television studio and the graphics shop.

On the affective level, students had to cooperate in a positive manner to develop a concept suitable for production. Not only did the preproduction phase of each commercial require a sense of community among the participants, but the actual production required effective communication and total cooperation for each student and his/her production task.

A great deal of pride and positive self-worth was also engendered within each student who showed their commercials to students in school and parents in the community. For two students, Victoria Maxwell and Barbara Miller, added attention was accrued for their participation in the State DECA competition. As stated in Mr. Farrell's letter, Victoria Maxwell received an honorable mention for her commercial.

4. Dissemination Activities Planned and/or Implemented

The commercials that were produced by Distributive Education students were shown to students and parents in the school and community. These commercials will be saved and presented to television students and Distributive Education students who enroll in these courses for the next school year. This will provide a stimulus or motivator for the project and assist in the continuation of the project objectives. Likewise, all slides, graphics, and storyboards produced during the year will be used in the Distributive Education curriculum and television curriculum next year.

It should also be noted that I was able to utilize this project and the materials produced by students when presenting a lecture to reading teachers on the effective use of media in reading programs.

5. Strategies or Activities Employed to Eliminate Sex Bias and Sex Role Stereotyping

During the summer production, three females and two males were hired. Of the three females, one was black and of the two males, one was black.

Because of the composition of the students in the Distributive Education classes, a majority of the students who produced commercials were female. These female students performed in both the design roles as well as the technical production roles in the television studio.

Two students entered the State DECA competition; both students were female and one was black.

C. Summary

1. Conclusions

Incorporating the production of television commercials into an existing Distributive Education program provided students with a more comprehensive unit on advertising. The producing of commercials for products actually sold in the school store provided students with an opportunity to incorporate classroom theory into practical sales. As stated by the Distributive Education teacher, the commercials did create an awareness in students of specific products on sale in the store as well as promote some specific sales.

Observations by the Distributive Education teacher and the television instructor indicate that students involved in this high motivational activity, producing a commercial, developed a positive attitude toward themselves and their peers. A sense of community was enhanced as students had to work in a team/cooperative manner during the production. The program also afforded students an opportunity to strive for a goal: the State DECA competition. Because of the performance of two of our students in this competition, one of which who received an honorable mention, it can be stated that the program generated student and faculty interest and commitment which will continue in the following school years.

Through the observations of the television instructor, it can also be stated that students not directly involved in the program illustrated their interest and support while reviewing the commercial in small group settings during the school day.

Another unique aspect of the program was that it generated an increased use of television equipment and Distributive Education laboratory facilities.

2. Recommendations

Continued coordination of television studio availability and Distributive Education class periods is strongly recommended so that the television instructor can be available to work directly with the Distributive Education teacher and the Distributive Education students. Originating the television advertising unit in September on a rotating basis with small groups from the Distributive Education class will permit more time for the preparation of the state DECA competition. In accordance with this, the television instructor and the Distributive Education teacher should meet during the school year to assess program objectives and student progress in the preproduction and production phases of the unit.

Because of the interest expressed by students in the commercials, all student productions should be shared with the student body through the school's television system.

Another possible use for the student commercials is to show these commercials during freshman orientation in the fall of each school year. After freshmen students view the commercials, they would be aware of the Distributive Education program, the products being sold in the school store and the opportunity that exists for producing an original commercial.

III SUPPLEMENTARY PAGES

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